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UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE
WORK OF BENEDETTO AND SANTI BUG-
LIONI FOR BADIA TEDALDA

BENEDETTO BUGLIONI is mentioned by Vasari as the author of many works in glazed terra-cotta both in and outside of Florence. Several documents concerning works by him have been published in recent years, but the monuments themselves are so heterogeneous that it has been difficult to isolate and define his style. During my Robbia studies I have set aside about a hundred monuments, which I have provisionally assigned to Benedetto Buglioni and his assistant Santi Buglioni. These I hope some day to publish. Among them are several monuments at Badia Tedalda, a village with an abbey situated between Borgo San Sepolcro and San Marino. Well I remember some twenty-five years ago being driven to this remote spot in eager expectation, since Cavallucci and Molinier had led me to look for the handiwork of Luca and of Andrea della Robbia. I learned later to curb such expectations, since all works in glazed terra-cotta, especially those in remote places, are generally attributed to the leading masters of the school.

In examining the archives of S. Maria Nuova my friend, Mr. Rufus G. Mather, recently discovered the documents, which I am publishing now in connection with some unpublished photographs.

I. Altar-piece of the Madonna Enthroned with Saints.

This relief (Fig. 1) shows the Madonna enthroned holding on her lap the nude, standing Child. To the left are S. Lionardo, with yoke and book, patronymic Saint of Messer Lionardo Buonafede, donor of the relief, and S. Michele, with sword and scales, to whom the abbey was dedicated; to the right S. Girolamo with a stone against his heart and a book, at his feet a lion, a favorite Saint in lonely places, and S. Benedetto representing the Fratres Cassinenses, or Benedictine monks from Monte Cassino, who were the first incumbents of the abbey church. The scene occurs in Paradise indicated by the palm and other trees visible above the wall against which the Saints are standing. In type the Madonna differs little from the Madonna of the J. S. Morgan altar-piece

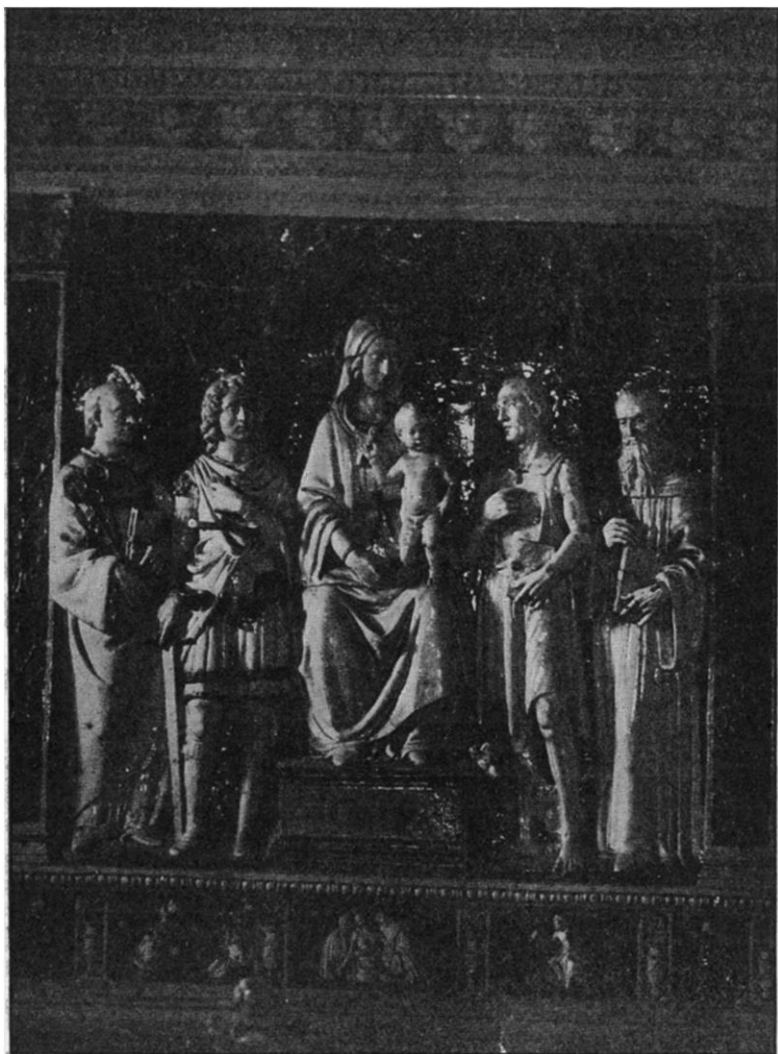


FIGURE 1.—MADONNA AND SAINTS: BADIA TEDALDA.

(1502),¹ which may now be attributed definitely to Benedetto Buglioni. The pilasters, capitals, and architraves are alike in both altar-pieces. The cherub frieze, in which the cherubs are separated by yellow rays of light, occurs not infrequently on altar-pieces by Benedetto Buglioni. The predella shows at

¹ *Della Robbias in America*, fig. 67.

either end the arms of Lionardo Buonafede; *or*, a bull passant *gules* on a mount of six summits *vert*. Above the shield is a Bishop's mitre. Separated by pilasters with slender vases are scenes of (1) a miracle of S. Lionardo, (2) Christ in the Sepulchre supported by the Virgin and S. Giovanni, and (3) S. Girolamo in the desert.

DOCUMENTS

1. YHS MDXVI°

"Badia di santo angelo tedaldj diconro
de dare

1517

E adj xxv digiugno f quindiej d° in° la(rghi)
faccianbuoni a m° benedetto digiovan(n)j
buglione schultore di terra chotta posto
debbj avere dj xij al(li)b(r)o pig° e fittj C
a c 5 e f.iii p° (posto) m(esser) L^{do} n(ost)ro mag°
avere in q° c— avutj dalluj dicōtantj
e qualj dj (ducatj) 15 sono p(er) j^a tavola
daltare fatta fare m(esser) L^{do} detto p(er)
lasop(r)adetta badia che fu invetriata
dentrovj la n(ost)ra don(n)a col bambino et
s(an)c(t)o B^{uo} (Benedetto) sangirolamo s(an)c(t)o L^{do}
et samichele cō predella pilastrj
architrave fregio et chornicie—f 15-1—"

[*Archiv. dell' Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova, Libro Giallo, F. 1516-1518, c. 78*]

2. + yhs MDXVIJ

I(n) q^{to} 291

"Benedetto digiovan(n)j di berenarddo
dantonio schultore"

.
.
.

+ yhs MDXVIJ

I(n) q^{to} 291

"Benedetto digiovan(n)j schultore
diconro de avere addi xxv
dj giugno 1517 f dodiej doro
glifacianobuonj i(n) soma dj
fxv doro comapare al(li)b(r)o
giallo s(egna)to f c 78 inchoito
dellabadia di santo agniola
tedalddj p(er) una tavola
di n(ost)ra don(n)a com piu
fiure (figure) dreanttovj
tutti di terra chotta
eddachorddo con m(esser)
L^{do} n(ost)ro magiore—f 12-1—"

.
.
.

[*Archiv. idem, Libro Fitti e Livelli, C. 1517-1525, c. 5 e V*]

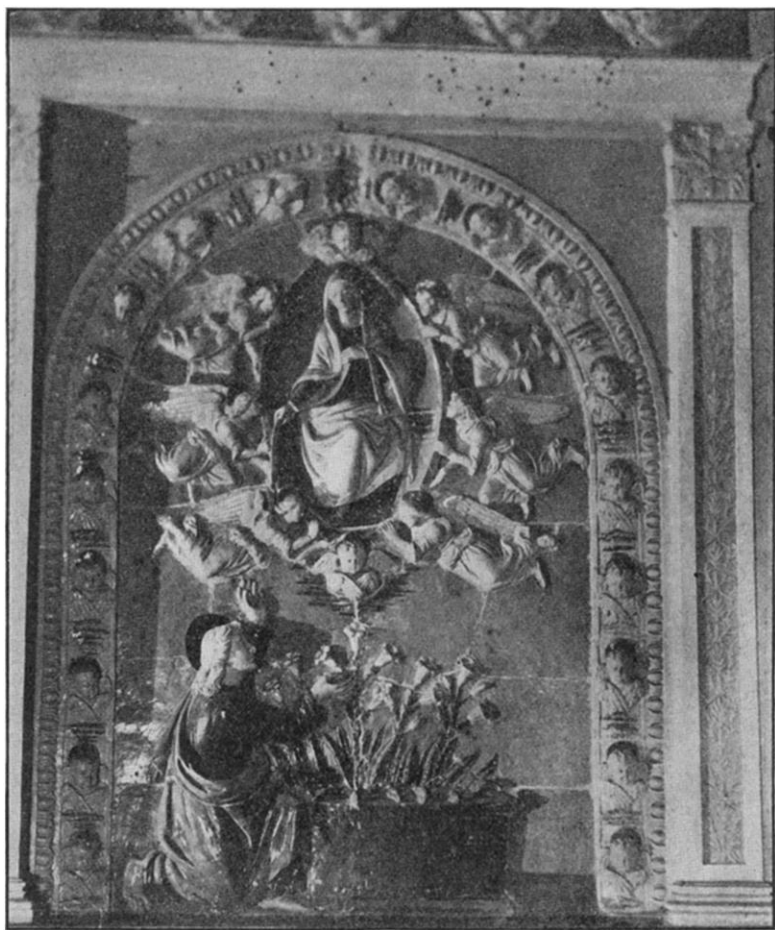


FIGURE 2.—MADONNA DELLA CINTOLA: BADIA TEDALDA.

3.

—YHS MDXVIJ°

M(esser) Lionardo di Giovanni Buonafe nr° magg°
de avere

.
.

E ad(i)detto (xxv digiugno) l otto p(iccioli) anzi f tre
la(rghi) d° sono che tantj ne pago piu
tenpo fa am° benedetto di gⁱ schultore
p(er) cōto duna tavola daltare di terra
chotta fatta p(er) la badia di santagniolo

come apare a suo cōta in q° c78 in soma
di f xv d°—— f 3-1—”

[*Archiv. idem. Libro Giallo*, F. 1516-1518, c. CCXLVIII]

The first document, on the books of the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, shows that the Badia di Sant' Angelo (S. Michele) at Badia Tedalda agreed to pay to Benedetto di Giovanni di Bernardo d'Antonio Buglioni on the 25th of June, 1517, fifteen golden ducats or florins, of which he had already received three from Messer Lionardo di Giovanni Buonafede, for a glazed terra-cotta altar-piece representing the Madonna and Child with SS. Bene-



FIGURE 3.—CIBORIO: BADIA TEDALDA.

a frieze composed of cherub heads separated from each other by garish clouds. The outer pilasters and entablature are made of plaster.

The Ciborio or tabernacle for the sacred host (Fig. 3) is of a type not uncommon with its grilled floor, the *sportello* flanked by

detto, Girolamo, Lionardo, and Michele, including a predella, pilasters, architrave, frieze, and cornice. The second shows that Benedetto Buglioni received on this account twelve golden florins, and the third that Buonafede was paid back the three florins which he had advanced to Benedetto Buglioni for this altar-piece.

II. *The Madonna della Cintola and a Ciborio.*

Around headed altar-piece (Fig. 2). Here is represented the Virgin seated on clouds, within a *mandorla* supported by six angels, and lowering her girdle to S. Tommaso, who clad in maroon with mantle of blue is on his knees ready to receive it in front of her sarcophagus filled with lilies.

The relief is surrounded by

two angels in niches, and a dove overhead. The tympanum shows the Infant Christ blessing and three heads of cherubs.

DOCUMENT

4 {	"E de dare adi xv dimagio 1521 f sej s x li(larghi) doro inoro autj p(er) noj e degluominj * { delabadia tedaldj e qualj gliebe santi di michele ischultore—f 6 l 3 s x { E de dare adi xv deto f tre li doro inoro porto santi dimichel chele (sic) chontanti p(er) resto di lavori auti— f 3 l—s—"	{ E de avere adi xv di magio 1521 f 5to li doro inoro sono p(er) una Tavola dasūzione di n(ostra) don(n)a di terra chōta * { auta daluj p(er) mandarla alabadia tedaldj p(er) chonto di m(esser) nostro magiore—f 8 l— { E de avere adi dēto f uno e mezo li doro inoro sono p(er) la valuta duntabernacholo da chorpo isdominj auto daluj p(er) deta badia— f 1 l 3—s 10—"
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[Arch. dell' Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova, Libro Fitti e Livelli, C. 1517-1525, c. 5 e V]

The altar-piece of the Assumption and the Corpus Domini tabernacle were paid for on the same day, May 15, 1521, at a combined cost of nine florins, three lire, ten soldi. It may be



FIGURE 4.—THE ANNUNCIATION: BADIA TEDALDA.

noted that payments are made to Santi di Michele (Santi Buglioni). According to Milanese, Benedetto Buglioni died March 7, 1521. Messer Lionardo di Giovanni Buonafede, the Maggiore or Administrator of S. Maria Nuova, mentioned above, remains the Florentine representative of the Badia.

III. *S. Gabriele and the Annunziata.*

On the wall to the left of the principal altar is a figure of S. Gabriele (arm and wing damaged) holding a branch of lilies (Fig. 4); to the right is the Annunziata with blue mantle over a maroon robe. The Angel is evidently by the same hand as S. Tommaso in the Assumption relief and the Annunziata is a counterpart of the Virgin in the lunette of the altar-piece next to be described. I am inclined to believe therefore that these Annunciation figures cost the two florins paid to Santi Buglioni on May 23, 1522.

DOCUMENT

5. "E addj 23 dj maggio 1522
f dua li in° p(er) luj da
Santi di michele schultore a
entrata s^{to} h 48—f 2—1—"

[Arch. dell' Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova, Libro Fitti e Livelli, C. 1517-1525, c. 5 e V]

IV. *Altar-piece of S. Sebastiano and Saints.*

This altar-piece (Fig. 5) has undergone serious changes. Its original frame has gone, except a few cherubs from the frieze, now a part of the large plaster framework. The lunette now divides the central relief into an upper and lower half. The upper half represents the Annunciation, S. Gabriele with lily branch striding toward the Virgin, beckoning to her with his right hand. A large vase of lilies separates him from the Virgin who is seated before a lectern reading. The Holy Dove radiating light is overhead.

The lower relief represents in the centre S. Sebastiano nude, except for a loin cloth, his hands tied behind his back, while angels hold a martyr's palm and a crown near his head. To the left is S. Giuliano, clad in short tunic and mantle, with sword and martyr's palm. A dog is at his feet. To the right is S. Antonio Abate, heavily draped, holding a crutch and a book. A black pig is at his feet.

This is not the principal or high altar, although it may have

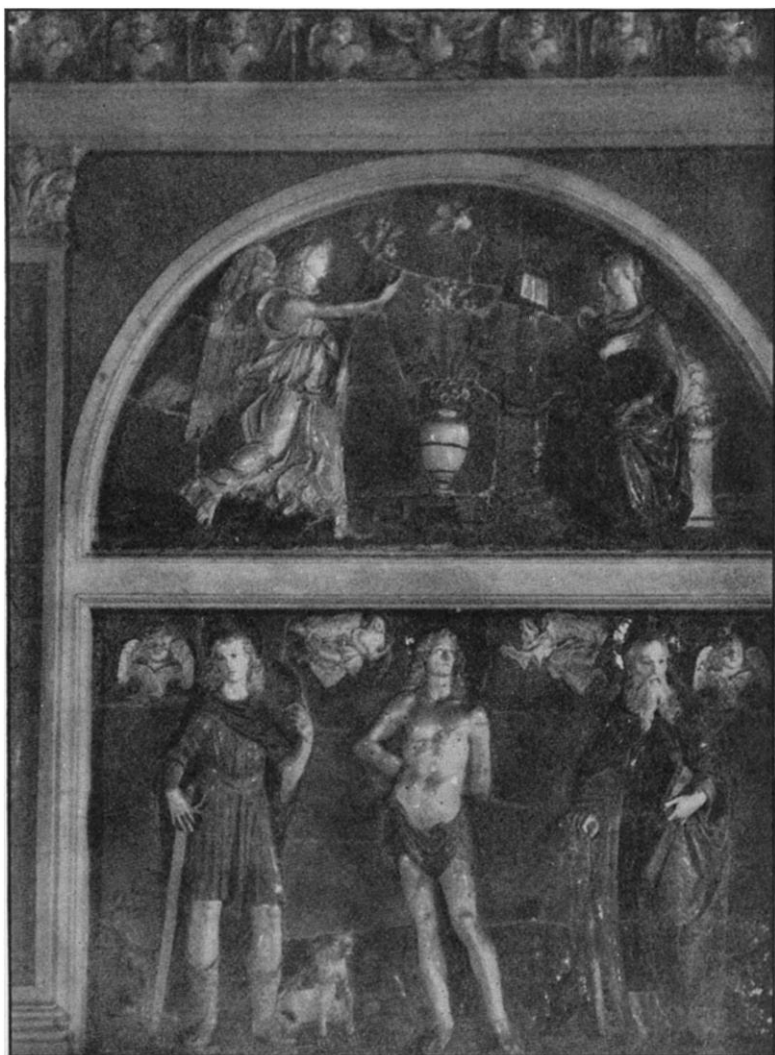


FIGURE 5.—S. SEBASTIANO AND OTHER SAINTS: BADIA TEDALDA.

been so designed by Santi Buglioni who was paid ten florins for it on the twentieth of September 1522.

DOCUMENTS

6. "E addi xx dj settenbre 1522
f diecj li d° in° chontantj

seglj fanno buonj p(er) una
 tavola fatta p(er) unaltare
 maggiore della badja
 Santangjolo tedaldj et p(er)
 luj da santi dj michele
 Schultore chome disse
 m(esser) L^{do} n° maggiore
 debjtore allibro V(er)de h c. 32—f. 10—1—”¹

[*Arch. dell' Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova, Libro Fitti e Livelli, C. 1517-1525, c. 5 e V*]

7.

“+ YHS MDXXXJ

Lionardo di giovannj buonafe nostro magiore
 dichontro de dare

.

E adi xx diset(ten)b(r)e 1522 f diecj li doro inoro
 fatj buonj p(er) luj a isantj dimichele ischultore
 e p(er) lui a benedetto di giovannj ischultore
 posto avere a(l)lib(r)o pigone s^{to} c 5/e disono
 p(er) resto e paghamento duna tavola auta
 daluj mandata p(er) suo chonto alabadia
 tedaldj — f 10-s—”

.

[*Archiv. dell' Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova, Libro Verde, H. 1521-1524, c. 32*]

It may be noted that Messer Lionardo di Giovanni Buonafede is to pay ten florins for the accounts of Benedetto and Santi Buglioni. This payment was to be made on the 20th of September, 1522. If Milanese's date for the death of Benedetto Buglioni, March 7, 1521, be correct, then this payment would have been made to his estate. It is evident, however, both from the monument itself and from the document that the sculptor in this case was Santi di Michele and not Benedetto Buglioni.

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¹ Below is the sum f. 47 l 2. 16. apparently a total received by Santi Buglioni, although not the total of the entries here recorded.